



## SVP politician Zanetti acquitted of accusation of slandering Palestinians

Zurich SVP politician and former National Councillor Claudio Zanetti was acquitted by the Hinwil District Court after being charged with retweeting a post on the X platform (formerly Twitter). In January 2024, Zanetti had retweeted a post by Israeli army spokesman Arye Sharuz Shalicar with the slogan “Never again is now” and a graphic showing a fist in the colors of Israel smashing a swastika in the colors of the Palestinian flag. The public prosecutor’s office accused Zanetti of denigrating the Palestinian ethnic group and inciting hatred, and requested a fine for violating the criminal law on racism.

Zanetti firmly rejected the accusations. He explained that the post was clearly directed against the terrorist organization Hamas, which propagates the destruction of Israel and uses the Palestinian flag itself. The aim of his repost was solidarity with Israel after the Hamas terror attack on October 7, 2023, not an attack on the Palestinian population. His lawyer also argued that Palestinians are not a protected group within the meaning of Art. 261bis SCC and that a repost does not constitute approval of the content.

The judge followed this view. He emphasized the political context, the importance of freedom of expression and the clear reference to Hamas. The message was to be understood as a call to destroy Hamas and was not punishable by law. Criticism may also be formulated in an exaggerated manner. The acquittal came after a brief deliberation; a further appeal of the verdict is possible.